

Perimeter Security

Secure your home at the property line

A home intruder generally looks for two elements when selecting a home: he has to be able to get in and out quickly, and he must remain unseen. If either one of these conditions doesn't exist, usually he will move on to the next house. A great place to slow down an intruder and expose him is at the property line.

Products you can purchase:

- **Perimeter lighting**
Many burglars prefer the cover of darkness. By keeping your property well lit at night, you take away their anonymity, forcing them to find another target. Make sure your lights illuminate darker areas like back doors and windows, shrubbery, walkways and entrances to your garage.
- **Motion sensors**
When linked to your outdoor lighting system, motion sensors will startle an intruder by instantly drowning him in light. You can set the sensitivity of most motion sensors so that lights go on when necessary.
- **Timers for interior lights**
If you're going away on vacation, put timers on your interior lights. Look for timers that stagger when your lights go on from day to day. This will prevent a pattern from being established. From the sidewalk your home will look occupied, encouraging burglars to move on without trying to break in.
- **Security cameras**
Security cameras are usually associated with businesses like banks and convenience stores, but many people use them for their home defense. Cameras can be linked to a VCR in your home or to a security company that will send help immediately.
- **Maximum Security deadbolts**
For your most important line of defense, make sure you install deadbolts on every entry door to your house. The deadbolts you use on your home should be Grade 2 or higher, offering the best security. If you have a garage attached to your home, make sure there's a deadbolt on the door linking your house and garage.

There's more you can do. Part of the fun of owning a home is experimenting with your home's image. While you're making your home as attractive as you can to your friends and neighbors, you can make it equally unattractive to intruders.

- **Join a Neighborhood Watch**
One of the most effective and inexpensive ways to secure your home at the property line is to turn on the eyes and ears of your neighborhood. Community policing programs, like Neighborhood Watch, have shown great success in reducing property crime around the world. Burglars know when they're being watched. And they don't like it.
- **Don't advertise your absence**
Put away items like sports equipment, lawn mowers, portable grills and bicycles. If you leave your possessions outside, burglars may start to wonder what you have inside.
- **If you go on vacation**
Have your mail and newspaper delivery stopped and arrange to have your yard maintained and your driveway shoveled. Notify a neighbor or friend that you will be out of town and ask that they keep a watchful eye on your house. Ask them to park in your driveway or parking space to make it appear that you are home.
- **Lock your car while it's in the driveway**
Always lock your car when it's in the driveway or parked in front of your house. Not only will you protect your car, you will prevent anyone from stealing your garage door opener, which would give them easy access to your home. Make sure that you include a deadbolt on the door leading from your garage to your house, in case anyone gains entry to your garage.
- **Trim hedges and shrubs**
The worst thing you can do is give an intruder a place to hide while breaking into your home. Keep all of your bushes trimmed and your hedges low.
- **Secure your windows**
- **CLEARLY marked address on the front and rear of your home**

A common entry point for burglars is a ground level window at the side or rear of the house. Strong perimeter security makes an intruder's job as hard as possible. Use any of the tips above and you'll go a long way toward making your home off limits to criminals



Home Security Checklist

In any given year, property crimes outnumber violent crimes almost eight to one. A burglar spends approximately 45 minutes deciding which home is going to be his next target and only three minutes burglarizing the home. Take this quiz to discover solutions for all your home security and asset protection needs.

1. Have you installed deadbolts on all exterior doors, including the door between your house and garage?
 - For the best security, install Grade 2 deadbolts, as a minimum, on all entry doors. Don't forget the entry between your home and attached garage.
2. Are your windows secured by quality window locks?
 - Forty percent of burglaries occur because a door or window was left unlocked, according to a recent U.S. Department of Justice report on crime. Window locks can stop a burglar in his tracks.
3. Is landscaping trimmed well so hedges and shrubs don't hide your windows?
 - Keep your home visible from the street. Trim any tree branches or shrubs that hide your windows because they can also hide a burglar.
4. Is your property lit well at night?
 - Many burglars prefer the cover of darkness. By keeping your property well lit at night, you take away their anonymity, forcing them to find another target. Make sure your lights illuminate darker areas like back doors and windows, shrubbery, walkways and entrances to your garage.
5. When you go away on vacation, do you use timers for interior lights?
 - Put your lights on timers when you go on vacation. When they go on, it will look like someone's home and has just turned on the lights.
6. Do you hide spare keys outside?
 - Never hide spare keys outside. Burglars are adept at sniffing them out.
7. Do you have a home alarm system?
 - Homes with security systems are 60 percent less likely to be hit by a burglary, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.
8. Do all your exterior doors have a wide-angle eye viewer that allows you to identify visitors?
 - Install a door viewer. When combined with a deadbolt, it allows you to see who's knocking from the security of a locked door.
9. Have you changed the locks since moving into your home?
 - If you've recently moved into your home, the only security for your peace of mind is to replace all your keyed locks – front, back and garage.
10. Have you planted thorny or prickly shrubbery near windows?
 - Thorny or prickly shrubbery is uninviting for burglars looking for a place to hide.

11. Do motion sensors control your exterior lighting?

When linked to an outdoor lighting system, motion sensors will startle an intruder by instantly drowning him in light. You can set the sensitivity of most motion sensors so that lights go on when necessary, not when your neighbor's cat walks across the lawn.

12. Do you leave your home unlocked for a child coming home from school?

Don't leave your home unlocked -- provide keys to children coming home after school. According to the National Crime Prevention Council, in almost half of all completed residential burglaries, thieves simply breezed in through unlocked doors or crawled through unlocked windows.

13. Do you ever leave ground level windows open or ajar when you're not home?

Ground level windows that are open or ajar can serve as points of easy entry into your home.

14. Do all of your sliding glass doors have at least one of the following?

- Track lock
- Hinged door bar
- Insertion pin lock
- Metal or wood dowel in track

Since sliding glass doors can be the easiest points of entry to your home, make sure you install adequate security devices.

10 Things You Must Know About Home Security

Break-ins are a crime of opportunity, where entry is often gained due to carelessness of homeowners. Follow these ten essentials and you will significantly reduce the probability of unlawful entry.

1. Lock All Your Doors 24/7.

Most unlawful entry is through doorways. And about 50% of those are through doors left unlocked. An unlocked lock is not a lock!

- 51% of break-ins occur during daylight.
- 49% occur after dark.
- 8,600 break-ins a day. 1 every 13 seconds.

2. Deadbolt All Exterior Entrances.

Most burglaries are the result of forcible entry. Every exterior entryway into your home needs a deadbolt with a full 1" throwbolt.

- Treat the door from the garage to inside the house as an exterior door.
- Exterior doors should be solid, 1-3/4" hardwood, with secure frames.

3. Intruders Fear the Spotlight.

An intruder's greatest fear is being seen. Don't give them a place to hide.

- Good exterior lighting around your perimeter creates a psychological barrier.
- Consider motion activated light fixtures.
- All porches and other entrances should be lit with at least 40-watt bulbs.
- Trim the overgrown bushes, tree limbs, or landscaping to the height of porches or windows.

4. **Glass Can Shatter Your Security.**

- Locks less than an arm's length away from glass panels and sidelights require glass brick, grates or grilles. Where building codes allow, install double cylinder deadbolts that need to be opened with a key from the inside as well as the outside.
- A sliding glass door is lifted into position when installed - and easily lifted out if you're not careful. Adjust screw in the door track to limit clearance. Add a wooden dowel or broom handle too.
- Retrofit ground floor windows with locking hardware.

5. **"While You're On Vacation, I'll Just Let Myself In."**

Maintain the appearance of occupancy at all times.

- Use automatic timers to turn on different lights at different times.
- Have a trusted neighbor pick up your mail and newspapers. And, occasionally use your garbage cans.
- During the winter, arrange to have snow shoveled.
- Most break-ins occur between 10am and 3pm. Put a radio or a TV on a timer. Turn the ringer on the telephone down.

6. **Start A Neighborhood Watch.**

Neighbors watching out for each other is the most effective method of crime prevention. Host a Neighborhood Watch get-started meeting for your block, and invite a police department representative to assist with planning, education, training and prevention techniques.

7. **Remember That Key You Thought You Put Under the Mat?**

- Never hide keys under a mat, or taped above a door jamb: Burglars know these places.
- Leave a key with a trusted neighbor.
- Don't place identification tags on your key or key rings.

8. **Help the Police Help You.**

- House numbers should be at least 4" - 6" high, reflective and visible from the street.
- Numbers should be illuminated at night.
- Report strangers running through private yards or alley ways or anyone looking into windows of houses or parked cars.
- Call the police. Don't worry about false alarms. Better to be safe than sorry.
- Call 911 if an emergency threatens human life or property. If not an emergency call your local police department directly.

9. **Burglars Prefer Cash.**

Burglars want cash or items easily fenced for cash; small electronic equipment, computers, cameras, jewelry, hand guns. Don't make it easy...

- Empty stereo and television boxes in the alley is a strong temptation to "inquire within".
- Hide your valuables or keep them under lock and key.
- Engrave your valuables with "THIS PROPERTY STOLEN FROM ..." and include your driver's license number. Marked property is difficult to fence and easier to recover.

10. **Gone in 60 Seconds.**

Research by The National Crime Prevention Institute shows that burglars generally will work no longer than 60 seconds to obtain entry.

Be informed. Insist on the best security available.